

NAVAL HOSPITAL CAMP PENDLETON

HEALTH WATCH

&

NEWSLETTER



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"Health in Garrison. Readiness in Deployment."

Jul - Sep 2005

NHCP Has A New Commanding Officer

Douglas W. Allen, NHCP PAO

Navy Capt. Steven M. Nichols assumed command of Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton from Navy Capt. Richard R. Jeffries in a formal Change of Command ceremony held on the athletic field in front of the hospital at 9 a.m., July 27, 2005.

The Surgeon General of the Navy, Vice Adm. Donald C. Arthur attended the ceremony and praised Jeffries' accomplishments to the audience of nearly 500.

"Capt. Jeffries has done an excellent job of taking care of Camp Pendleton's Marines, Sailors and their families. This hospital, more than any other (Navy hospital), has borne the brunt of supporting the Global War on Terrorism."

Since 2001, NHCP has deployed 497 staff members to Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently 41 staff members are deployed with 57 set to go soon. The hospital has approximately 2000 active duty and civilian staff to service a 164,000 patient base. **New C.O.- Pg. 3**



Capt. Steven M. Nichols, the new NHCP commanding officer, salutes as he's being piped aboard for the Change of Command Ceremony July 27. (U.S. Navy Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jeri-Ann Manni)

NHCP Passes Joint Commission Accreditation

Douglas W. Allen, NHCP PAO

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton and its outlying medical clinics were awarded the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™ Sep. 23 from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

The seal signifies that NHCP has met the requirements to receive full accreditation for another three years from the JCAHO. To receive this acknowledgement the hospital underwent a five-day survey process in April evaluating

safety and patient care. "We take great pride in caring for our service members and their families and want to ensure we are providing the best medical care possible. JCAHO accreditation reaffirms that we are meeting nationwide quality



standards," said Colleen Altman, organizational performance improvement coordinator at NHCP. The Joint Commission is an independent, not-for-profit organization, established more than 50 years ago.

The organization evaluates more than 15,000 health care organizations and sets the standards by which health care quality is measured in America and around the world.

Visit www.JCAHO.org to view Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton's 2005 Quality Report from the Joint Commission (click on the Quality section).

Navy Doctors Complete Residency



Navy Lt. Timothy Stegeman, a second year Family Practice Resident, checks the reflexes on a physical therapy patient. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jeri-Ann Manni)

Douglas W. Allen, NHCP PAO

Eleven Navy Family Practice residents, three Navy dental residents and two Sports Medicine fellows graduated from their respective programs at Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton during a ceremony July 1.

NHCP is one of only five naval hospitals with a training program for Family Practice doctors.

According to NHCP Family Practice Residency Program Director, Navy Capt. John Holman, the Navy loses 50 to 60 Family Practice doctors annually through normal attrition.

"We typically have 36 doctors here learning their craft - 12 doctors in each of the three years of the program. This allows us to graduate 12 residents each year. Many of these doctors go to overseas and operational billets," Holman said.

A Navy family practice doctor's typical career path consists of a one-year internship at a naval hospital upon graduation from medical school. Then, some serve in the fleet for two or three years and return to a naval hospital for their two-year residency to become Family Practice doctors. Others stay at the hospital, immediately beginning the residency program and finish training in Family Practice in three years.

Navy dentists are licensed upon entry to the Navy and can immediately begin treating patients in dental clinics around the Navy and Marine Corps. They elect to attend a residency program voluntarily to gain advanced training and

experience, according to Navy Capt. Vlasta Miksch, Director, NHCP General Practice Residency Program.

The dental residency program at NHCP trains general dentists in specialty care diagnosis and treatment in addition to managing patients in a hospital environment.

All graduates of the NHCP dental residency program, which began in 1970, will be assigned to operational units with the Navy or Marine Corps.

The NHCP Family Practice Residency Training Program has consistently produced outstanding graduates.

"Many of our graduates will serve in Iraq or Afghanistan with Marine Corps operational units," Capt. Holman said. "We get feedback every year from line commanders who say our graduates are among the best they've ever seen." Since the Family Practice Residency Training Program began here in 1972, all graduates have become board certified.

This was only the third year for Sports Medicine Fellows, who are usually Family Practice physicians returning for training to specialize in treating and preventing injuries frequently associated with intense physical activities.

Health Watch & Newsletter

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Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

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To speak with the editorial department, call 760-725-1271, or E-mail at healthwatch@cpen.med.navy.mil.

Base Water Information

For information concerning the Base water system, please call one of the following:

Base Hotline: (866) 430-2764

Base Facilities: 725-4247

Environmental Security: 725-9741

Central Family Housing: 725-1656

NHCP Recieves Most Wired Award



Douglas W. Allen, NHCP PAO

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton was recognized as one of the nation's 100 "Most Wired" hospitals in a ceremony July 29 at the 2005 Health Forum Summit in San Diego.

This is the third year in a row that NHCP was selected by *Hospitals & Health Networks*, the journal of the American Hospital Association, as one of the "Most Wired" hospitals. H&HN surveyed 1,255 hospitals nationwide, and NHCP was one of only five military treatment facilities to make the list.

New C.O. Pg. - 1

The biggest challenge, said Jeffries, was changing the hospital from a peacetime operation to a wartime operation.

"We had an increase in mission on many fronts, from medically screening hundreds of activated reservists, to taking care of war casualties, to deploying 250 of our own, and all while still taking care of our enrolled Marines, Sailors, retirees and all of their family members," Jeffries said. Capt. Jeffries has been selected for rear admiral (lower half) and is moving to head a newly formed Future Plans and Strategy office at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in Washington, D.C.

Capt. Nichols' last command was Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, N.C. where he served as the executive officer. In his remarks, he stressed the importance of communication and the Navy's core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

To view Capt. Nichols' biography go to www.cpen.med.navy.mil and click on the Command Leadership link.

According to Information Resource Management Services Chief Knowledge Officer, Cmdr. Gordon Smith, the hospital was surveyed on their use of information technology to accomplish key goals, including safety and quality, customer service, business processes, workforce, and public health and safety.

Two of the major improvements made this year were the implementation of an electronic medical record and an integrated computerized safety reporting system.

"The electronic medical record we deployed makes a true 'lifetime medical record' a reality for our beneficiaries, allowing providers at any DoD site to access the same patient information," explains Smith.

"The safety reporting system was conceived by our Integrated Safety Commission and brings together all aspects of safety, from patient and event reporting to environmental, all under one umbrella."

Smith said NHCP is always improving knowledge management support of safe, quality health care.

This constant quest has led to the many improvements which resulted in the hospital's ongoing "most wired" recognition.

Free Labor Assistants Offered

Operation Special Delivery is a private organization consisting of more than 300 professional labor assistants or Doulas, who donate their services during wartime to women who are giving birth while their partners are on military deployment. These services are extended to all branches of the United States military, including reservists and National Guard members.

You are eligible for Operation Special Delivery if your husband/partner is currently deployed due to the war on terrorism or will be deployed at the estimated time of your baby's birth, or your husband/partner has been severely injured or lost his life due to the current war on terrorism.

To apply complete the Client Data Form found at www.operationsspecialdelivery.com/clientdata.htm or pick up a copy of the form at the OB/Gyn Clinic at NHCP. For more information about this program contact the OB/Gyn Clinic at 725-1982.

Important TRICARE Information

What is TRICARE?

TRICARE is the DoD health plan for active duty, retirees, & their family members. TRICARE has three options: Prime, Extra, & Standard. TRICARE Prime has the lowest out-of-pocket expenses. For more information about the TRICARE program and the best option for you and your family, visit the TRICARE Service Center at the Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton on the 6th floor, call 1-888-TRIWEST, and/or visit tricare.osd.mil.

I've heard TRICARE is run by a contractor. What does this mean?

The TRICARE Prime program involves the military treatment facilities, uniformed providers, & a large network of community hospitals & providers to provide quality care to our active duty, retirees, & their family members. The DoD uses TRICARE contractors to establish that network & coordinate care that is delivered outside of the MTFs. TriWest Health Alliance is the TRICARE contractor & TRICARE partner for the TRICARE West Region.

How do I enroll in TRICARE Prime?

You can enroll in TRICARE Prime by completing an enrollment application at any TSC or mailing in an application available for you to download at www.triwest.com. The TSC is open between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at NHCP & a TSC representative is located at the base Joint Reception Center to accept enrollment applications.

Why is it important to keep Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS) information updated?

DEERS is the official source for TRICARE eligibility and you must show as "eligible" in DEERS in order to receive your TRICARE benefits & correct payment of TRICARE claims. If your information is not correct in DEERS, you can have care denied and important information about your TRICARE benefit cannot reach you in the mail (i.e. prime enrollment cards & renewal notices, PCM changes, and care authorizations). You may verify your status in DEERS by calling 1-888-TRIWEST or visiting any TSC. You may update your DEERS information directly at any DEERS Office or by calling 1-800-538-9552. Address changes may be updated electronically at www.tricare.osd.mil/DEERSAddress.

I am Active Duty. Do I need to enroll in TRICARE Prime?

Yes. All Active Duty must enroll in Prime. Active Duty Service Members who require care from a civilian provider can encounter problems with authorizations and payment of claims if they are not correctly enrolled in Prime.

I am already enrolled from our last duty assignment; do I need to enroll myself or my family again?

You will need to re-enroll in Prime and select a new primary care manager (PCM) if you have moved & are located in a new TRICARE region. You will need to request a PCM change if you relocate to another area within the same TRICARE region and need to receive your care from a new PCM. This is important

to ensure referrals for specialty care and urgent care can be authorized and paid by the TRICARE contractor.

How do I change my PCM?

You can change your PCM over the phone by calling 1-888-TRIWEST or by visiting any TSC.

How do I get authorization for care when I am traveling away from my PCM?

When you are traveling away from Southern California and need urgent care, you can call 1-888-TRIWEST for assistance with authorizations and locating a nearby provider. It is not necessary to contact your PCM. If you have a true emergency (life, limb, or sight threatening), proceed to the nearest emergency room. Prior authorization is not required for real emergency care. It is always advisable to notify your PCM after you've received emergent or urgent care.

Customer Survey

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton has initiated a new online survey to gain your valuable input into the quality and delivery of our health care services. Your feedback is critical to improvements in our system.

Ask for a survey from your medical provider or go online at www.cpen.med.navy.mil.